



State of Tennessee Department of Children's Services

Administrative Policies and Procedures: 29.5

Subject: Contingency Plans for Youth Development Centers and DCS Group Homes

Supersedes: DCS 29.5, 03/01/02

Local Policy: Yes

Local Procedures: Yes

Training Required: Yes

Applicable Practice Model Standard(s): Yes

Approved by:

Effective date:

05/15/97

Revision date:

01/01/05

Application

To All Department of Children's Services Youth Development Center and Group Home Employees

Authority: TCA 37-5-101; TCA 37-5-102; NFPA 101 Life Safety Code

Policy

Each Department of Children's Services Youth Development Center (YDC) and Group Home shall have written contingency plans to manage emergency situations to limit operational disruption, rapidly resolve crisis situations and resume operations.

Procedures

A. Contingency plan development

1. Each YDC Superintendent and DCS Group Home Supervisor shall be responsible for the development of contingency plans within their facilities for implementation in the event of emergency situations. Each contingency plan shall include written procedures for:
 - a) **Confidentiality:** All contingency plans shall be treated as confidential and shall not be open for inspection by members of the public.
 - b) **Review and Revision:** Contingency plans shall be reviewed and revised annually by facility management and central office staff. Call lists shall be continuously

and consistently updated as staff and contact telephone numbers change.

- c) **Central Office Review:** Facility contingency plans will be submitted to the Executive Director, Office of Juvenile Justice, by July 1 of each year.
2. Emergency situations to be addressed in the contingency plan include, but are not limited to the following:
- a) **Disturbance/Riot:** A disturbance in which control of the institutional may be temporarily lost, destruction of property may take place and the safety of youth and staff may be jeopardized.
 - b) **Adverse job action:** Action by a group of employees to remain off the job in sufficient numbers to create a situation where control of the facility may be jeopardized.
 - c) **Hostage Incident:** A situation in which an individual or group of individuals are being detained against their will by use of force.
 - d) **Bomb threat:** The discovery of a bomb or a threat that a bomb will be exploded within the facility.
 - e) **Fire/Hazardous material:** Incidents of fire and hazardous material spills/accidents within the facilities. See DCS Policy [29.3, Fire Safety Evacuation Plans For Youth Development Centers and DCS Group Homes](#).
 - f) **Natural Disasters:** Events or incidents with catastrophic consequences to include, tornadoes, floods, earthquakes, weather disasters caused by rain, snow or wind that cause notable damage or loss of property.
 - g) **Hunger strike:** A situation in which all or significant portions of the youth refuse to eat.
 - h) **Escape:** A situation in which a youth residing in a secure facility has absconded from:
 - ◆ The secure facility,
 - ◆ An authorized work location while outside the secure facility,
 - ◆ Secure transport, or

- ◆ The supervision of secure facility staff to which the youth was assigned while outside the facility for any other purpose.
- i) **Runaway:** A situation in which a youth residing in a non-secure facility has absconded from:
 - ◆ A non-secure DCS group home,
 - ◆ An authorized work location, or
 - ◆ The supervision of staff to which the youth was assigned while outside the facility for any other purpose.

B. Plan content

1. Each contingency plan shall consist of planned responses to specific emergencies. All plans must:
 - a) Be accurate and concise,
 - b) Contain immediate action to be taken with specific emergency, and
 - c) Identify responsible individuals and provide for all necessary resources to respond to any emergency situation.
2. Each contingency plan must address functions and personnel assignments necessary to address the emergency situation. Depending on the nature of the emergency situation, the functions to be performed may differ in scope. In DCS group home settings where staff is limited, different staff may not perform the various functions and a single staff person may be required to perform several functions until additional staff arrives at the facility. The following functional coordinators may be necessary to address an emergency situation:
 - a) **Situation Coordinator:** The YDC Superintendent or DCS Group Home Supervisor will always function as the Situation Coordinator if they are on the premises. In the absence of the Superintendent or Group Home Supervisor, a position must be designated to assume command of the facility and direct operations during an emergency. The Situation Coordinator is authorized to activate local/state interagency assistance agreements while in a state of emergency.

- b) **Communication Coordinator:** Each plan shall identify a position responsible for establishing and maintaining a current emergency call list of staff and other individuals and agencies. The staff filling this position shall also be responsible for making the necessary notifications during a crisis situation.
- c) **Logistics Coordinator:** The logistics coordinator shall be responsible for ensuring that an emergency command site from which emergency operations can be directed is properly equipped and that necessary equipment is available and properly distributed to staff. The command post must provide the following:
 - ◆ Telephone lines; back up cell phones;
 - ◆ Radio/television;
 - ◆ Copy of contingency plan;
 - ◆ Facility diagram/plan including location of emergency power equipment such as generators;
 - ◆ Protective gear; and
 - ◆ Essential life support staples such as food, water, clothing, cots, and blankets.
- d) **Public Relations Coordinator:** The public relations coordinator shall be responsible for establishing a designated area for news media personnel. In the absence of the DCS Director of Communication, the public relations coordinator may release information to the media. Once available, the Director of Communication shall be responsible for the release of information.
- e) **Security and Control Coordinator:** The security and control coordinator will oversee the security and control of the facility, ensure the safety of youth in the facility and ensure the integrity of the physical plant. Specific responsibilities will include, but not limited to:
 - ◆ Video taping the incident,
 - ◆ Preservation of evidence,
 - ◆ Identification of participants
 - ◆ Logging of necessary information, and

- ◆ Collection of information/evidence for filing charges
 - f) **Health/Behavioral Health Coordinator:** An emergency situation may involve physical/fatal injury to staff or youth. Additionally, the stress of an emergency may produce the need for evaluation and intervention of health/behavioral health issues with either staff or youth. These situations must be identified to coordinate health/behavioral health needs.
 - g) **Human Relations Coordinator:** The human relations coordinator maintains communication between employees and their families and other significant individuals outside the facility to which staff have commitments or obligations that they are unable to perform as a result of the emergency.
3. All Coordinators shall be readily identifiable during an emergency. An appropriate means of identification such as ID tags, hats and vests shall be available to staff assigned specific functions.
4. Each plan shall also contain specific instructions and operational guidelines and shall, at a minimum address the following issues:
- a) Securing all youth and visitors,
 - b) Conducting emergency head counts,
 - c) Increasing internal and external security,
 - d) Control of security keys and radios,
 - e) Issuance of emergency keys for security locks, if appropriate to the situation,
 - f) Locations of electrical power switches,
 - g) Records preservation (educational, medical, court, etc.),
 - h) Deployment of security personnel,
 - i) Securing vehicles within the facility perimeter,
 - j) Provision of emergency medical treatment,
 - k) Protection of utilities,
 - l) Communication with the facility population during the

- emergency,
- m) Video recording of incident,
- n) Post emergency procedures including:
 - ◆ Identification of involved youth or staff,
 - ◆ Preservation of evidence,
 - ◆ Accountability of equipment,
 - ◆ Assessment of damages,
 - ◆ Documentation of injuries, and
 - ◆ Staff debriefing
- 5. New employees shall receive contingency plan training during their facility orientation. Experienced staff shall have contingency plan refresher training each month. This refresher training may be provided at roll call or any other appropriate time as determined by the facility Superintendent/Director.
- 6. Twice each year each facility shall have a “desk top” exercise to ensure familiarity with the contingency plans. Once each year, the central office will coordinate an unannounced drill to test staff readiness. Following announced drills and unannounced drills, there will be a performance evaluation and debriefing.
- 7. The Superintendent/Director is authorized to make mutual aid agreements with local/state agencies and to activate these agreements while in a state of emergency.

Forms

None

Collateral Documents

None

Standards

ACA 3-JTS-3B-07

ACA 3-JTS-3B-14

ACA 3-JCRF-3B-12

DCS Practice Model Standard – 8-306